

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.]

DEAR EDITOR: What is your opinion as to the best way of providing nurses for the small hospital? I mean the small county hospital with possibly a daily average of only twenty-five to thirty patients. In these days of registration, such institutions find it hard to establish a training school, because there is not the material at hand to furnish sufficient experience, and to employ a corps of graduate nurses is expensive.

On the other hand, in justice to both patients and public, the small hospital wants to supply good nursing, just as intelligent and skilled as that supplied in the larger institutions, and in order to do this it is obvious that its nurses must be either already trained or in training. Would not prospective pupils be those not eligible for training elsewhere? How is this problem to be met?

A. W.

DEAR EDITOR: I want to tell you about my visit to Paso Robles Spring last July, thinking it might prove interesting to other nurses who, unfortunately, like myself, might suffer from rheumatism. As I never before by actual experience knew the value of mineral baths, I naturally thought all I had to do was to go there, drink all the water possible, and take the baths and mud packs as I pleased or thought best. I learned better the first few days, but first I want to tell you why I selected this place when there are so many other springs in California. I chose it because I had heard that rheumatic troubles were given especial attention there. The first morning after my arrival I presented myself at the physician's office. He gave me a prescription of a mud pack to the right shoulder and left knee for twenty minutes, followed by a hot sulphur bath, after this to rest for two hours, also to eat plenty of all kinds of nourishing food. He told me that many mistakes were made in the line of diet in rheumatic cases. When the patients are very much run down, their blood thin and tissues poorly nourished, to keep **away nourishing food, such as meat and butter, was wrong.** A good deal of what is so commonly called rheumatism is really neuralgia. He advised me not to wear too heavy clothing, or to take too hot baths, but

to gradually accustom myself to cold sponges and very light underwear. He also told me to take from ten to fifteen grains of asperin, four or five times a day with a glass of water, instead of salicylate of soda or salicin, and his advice has proved very beneficial to me, for I find when I have an acute attack one or two doses of asperin will entirely send my old enemy flying. I had suffered so long and when treatment at mineral springs had been suggested I had felt that I could not afford it. These springs are by no means the least expensive place to go to, but I can never speak highly enough of the way I was treated there, or of the benefit I received from my two weeks' stay. When leaving for the hot springs I was told to be sure and take my baths as hot as possible and to remain in as long as I could stand it, and the first day I thought I would try this, but I was glad to follow my doctor's advice after that for I very nearly died, as the heart action would not allow such strong measures. This is often the reason why people come away worse than when they started. They know so much more than their doctor.

While I was ill I was often reminded of what Dr. S. Weir Mitchel, our great nerve specialist, once said: "God deliver us from our friends when we are ill," of course thereby meaning those who are so ready with wrong advice, for no one certainly can understand our need and constitution but the doctor who is working and worrying over us to get us well.

Paso Robles, which means Pass of the Oaks, was discovered a great many years ago by the Indians, and where their trail used to be, the Southern Pacific Railroad runs. The distance is half way between San Francisco and Los Angeles, with an endless chain of mountains in all directions, and of an elevation of seven hundred and twenty feet above sea level. The little town of the same name has a population of fifteen hundred people. The tourists or health seekers are, however, so numerous that the place seems a great deal larger.

The hotel in which I staid was most comfortable, and had an unusually large veranda with all kinds of easy chairs, where every one may enjoy the most perfect peace and comfort as well as rest. Here one can sit or lie and look out on a perfect lawn, beautiful mountains, and enjoy the sun and fresh air. I have traveled a good deal but never have I seen such a climate with its purity of air and grand scenery. The almost total absence of mosquitoes and flies, as well as other hot weather pests, makes one free to enjoy everything. The absence of bugs I think is wholly due to the sulphur smell.

The bath house, which is connected with the hotel by a sun parlor, and an inclosed arcade, was a marvel to me, for never have I seen

anything more perfect for its use. Doctors and nurses at once appreciate the surgical cleanliness which prevails everywhere in this building. It is furnished in white cedar, glass, Italian marble, porcelain, and white metal, and no odor of steam or grease can be detected anywhere. The large porcelain bath tubs have the natural sulphur water brought in by pipes right from the ground. This new building is only a little over one year old. Surely no one who is desirous of regaining health will make a mistake in going to a place like this.

THERESA ERICKSEN,
SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA.

DEAR EDITOR: In the November number of the *JOURNAL* I notice Miss Warner claims that the Memphis Training School is the oldest chartered school south of the Mason and Dixon line. The John N. Norton Memorial Infirmary, Louisville, Kentucky, was granted a charter as a Hospital, June 25, 1881, to take effect January, 1882, and the charter for the training school connected with the Infirmary was granted April 9, 1886, the Act being in force from the time of its passage. Like Miss Bushey I find that the demand for both institutional and private nurses far exceeds the supply. The conditions in the mountains of Kentucky are much as described by Miss Wyche and Miss Cabaniss.

ANNIE E. REE, Corresponding Secretary,
Kentucky State Association of Graduate Nurses.

DEAR EDITOR: It was not until yesterday that I received my November *JOURNAL*, which had not been forwarded, and saw the appeal which you so kindly had printed for the little Navajo Hospital.

Miss Thackera writes that she has had a number of applications and has sent for one nurse who is the daughter of a clergyman and who volunteered through the *JOURNAL* article. I am so thankful for the hospital is full and they are having a dreadful time of it without a nurse.

MARY BROOKS EYRE,
Denver, Colorado.



A social service department has been established in connection with the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Dispensary in Baltimore and also in connection with the Cook County Hospital in Chicago